

Lee Chapel and Museum

THE WASHINGTON COLLEGE PRESIDENT

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY:

The pre-visit activity is used to introduce students to Robert E. Lee as a college president. Lee is so well known as a general that most people don't know about his achievements after the Civil War. After the war, Lee become president of Washington College, now Washington and Lee University. Students should read the small passage about Lee and then answer the questions. Questions are on both the front and back.

What You'll Need:

- Writing utensil



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Washington and Lee University

Pre-Visit Activity

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Robert E. Lee was born on January 19, 1807, at Stratford Hall in Virginia. His parents were “Light Horse Harry” Lee and Anne Carter Lee. Lee attended West Point Academy from 1825-1829. After marrying Mary Anna Custis and starting a family, Lee had to put what he learned in school to the test. Lee fought in both the Mexican-American War and the Civil War.

After the Civil War ended in 1865, Robert E. Lee and his family moved to Lexington, Virginia. Lee became the president of Washington College. As president Lee helped fix school buildings, cared for the grounds and built the Chapel. He hired more staff and enrolled more students. Lee also believed in a practical education. He introduced new subjects into the classroom so students would be able to find jobs after graduating.



Lee was president for five years and so much of his work is still remembered. He passed away on October 12, 1870, leaving behind a legacy. After his death the college was renamed Washington and Lee University in his honor. He was a strong role model for the students, the staff and even the public. Many of Lee’s accomplishments are still part of higher education today.

If you were elected president of a college, name 5 improvements you would make.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

As president Lee was there to care for the people at Washington College. Lee's only rule was that one must "always be a gentleman."

What do you think this rule means?

Why do you think we need rules?

As president Lee met with each student once. Here he explained that students must work hard in school, be honest and treat other with respect.

Why do you need to work hard in school?

What do you think respect means?

Why do you think Lee thought all of these were important?

Lee was passionate about his students becoming respectful members of society. He wanted to see the students of Washington College help rebuild and reunite our country.